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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION IRAN US-INDIAN NUCLEAR DEAL
ARGENTINE ANTI-MONEY LAUNDERING LEGISLATION US ALLEGED
COMMENTS ON ARGENTINA'S BREAK ON EXPORTS MONSANTO
LIBERIA US IMMIGRATION POLICY 03/31/06

1. SUMMARY STATEMENT

Key international stories today cover Iran rejecting UN ultimatum; a US reporter being set free by Iraqi kidnappers; the Financial Action Task Force asking Argentine legislators to label terrorism as a crime; the US "criticizing Argentina's suspension of meat exports;" the trip of an Argentine delegation to the EU to try to stop Monsanto's steps for the collection of royalties on its RR transgenic soy; and the visit of Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands to Buenos Aires. Daily-of-record "La Nacion" carries an op-ed piece explaining the alleged reasons for India becoming a new US ally, and an editorial on the trial for crimes against humanity committed in Liberia. Leading "Clarín" carries an editorial on the US immigration policy.

2. OPINION PIECES AND KEY STORIES

- "Iran rejects UN ultimatum"

Daily-of-record "La Nacion" reports (03/31) "In a new challenge testing UN Security Council unity, Iran bluntly rejected the UN virtual ultimatum for the Islamic republic to stop its enriched-uranium related activities in no longer than 30 days.

"... The US is the country that pushes most to impose sanctions on Tehran in spite of the fact that, according to analysts, an oil embargo... would be very costly for the US economy itself...

"Analysts agree that, for the moment, the scenario of eventual sanctions is limited to possibly banning Iranian government officials' trips, freezing accounts abroad, and expelling the Iranian football team from Germany World Cup."

- "India, a new US ally"

Daily-of-record "La Nacion" carries an op-ed piece by Carlos Perez Llana, vice head, International Relations, Universidad Siglo XXI, who writes (03/31) "During US President Bush's recent visit to India, the US and India reached a historic deal on nuclear cooperation. If the US Congress ratifies it, India will stop suffering isolation in spite of being a 'de facto' nuclear power not endorsing the NPT. In this way, Washington could implement a double-sided policy

- a friendly country is forgiven while others, like Iran, are punished.

"This deal is a turning point in the US policy on non proliferation..."

"The US and India share a concern - how to manage China's increasing progress as a power..."

"The US and India have similar interests in the Islamic world. For Washington, the 'crisis crescent' is in the region, and India considers the Islamic presence in its territory troublesome... The 'clash of civilizations' in India is more than a hypothesis, and radical trends have appeared in both Hinduism and Islamism.

"Also, India obtains its oil supply (not a minor issue) from the region, which explains the caution assumed in the Iran case. Additionally, the US and India are also concerned about the eventual destabilization of two regimes - Pakistan and Saudi Arabia. Destabilization could place Pakistan's nuclear and missile secrets and the Saudi oil income in Al Qaeda's hands.

"This complex network of interests explains the sense and nature of the US-Indian nuclear cooperation deal. It is a strong bet between the superpower and an emerging power... aimed at guaranteeing stability in Asia and post-Cold War international balance."

- "FATF insists that Argentine legislators label 'terrorism' as a crime"

Business-financial, center-right "InfoBae" reports (03/31) "After the approval of the anti-money laundering legislation, which attended to the Financial Action Task Force (FATF)'s demands, its president, Kader Asmal, asked legislators to make progress on labeling 'terrorism' as a crime and help the Executive Branch in obtaining a greater coordination among anti-money laundering institutions.

"... The truth is that the draft bill is still far from the FATF's demands, although it could serve the Government to win time and pass the FATF's evaluation in the June international meeting to be held in Paris.

"What is still pending is labeling terrorism as a crime in the Criminal Code as well as the cases in which someone should be prosecuted for 'terrorism financing.'"

- "The US criticizes Argentina's brake on exports"

Silvia Naishtat, columnist of leading "Clarín," writes (03/31) "The Argentine Foreign Ministry tried to downplay a document released by the US Department of Agriculture, which harshly criticized the Argentine brake on meat exports for 180 days. The document suggests that the interests of US corporations are being affected. Without mentioning them, it refers to Campbell Soup... and Finexcor, the only US cold-storage plant in the country, which belongs to Cargill.

"According to the document, one wonders whether this sacrifice will serve the country to win the battle against inflation..."

- "(Argentine) official mission to Europe due to Monsanto"

Alejandra Groba, columnist of business-financial "El Cronista," writes (03/31) "Next week, an Argentine

government delegation will travel to the EU and meet with Brussels authorities and the Customs Houses of four other countries in order to put a brake on Monsanto's steps. Monsanto has delayed eight ships loading Argentine soy flour at European ports and has sued the purchasers of those cargos for damages as a way to press for payment of royalties on its RR-transgenic soy.

"According to an Argentine agricultural government official, what the Argentine delegation will attempt to prove is that 'Monsanto's 'modus operandi' is a strategic argument that the company is using to wield pressure because Monsanto does not need to delay ships in Europe in order to prove that the flour contains the RR-gene - it can do it in the country. What it is really seeking is to intimidate the Government and producers and obtain international support for its demands."

13. EDITORIALS

- "Latin Power in the US"

An editorial in leading "Clarín" reads (03/31) "Recent large Latin demonstrations in several US cities recalled human rights mobilizations of past decades... These protest demonstrations were a sign of the increasing influence of the Hispanic people on US society."

"There is a new, strongly multi-cultural configuration of US society, with the Hispanic community as its main minority..."

"Immigration policies can be both a tool of social integration and of exclusion. In the latter case, it deprives a great number of people of the civil rights enjoyed by the rest of the citizens."

"Recent demonstrations revealed that the US is a multi-cultural society, that immigrants are part of and, therefore, deserve to enjoy same rights and guarantees."

- "The judgment of Liberian crimes"

Daily-of-record "La Nación" editorializes (03/31) "The moment of truth is getting closer for former Liberian dictator Charles Taylor, who could soon become the first president of an African country to face an international court for having committed crimes against humanity."

"... While Taylor is waiting to assume his responsibility, the 16,000-man UN Peace Force that has been deployed in Liberia must stay in the country to guarantee stability and support the popularly-elected president. One should not rule out that the former dictator will attempt to destabilize once again the political scenario of his country and escape justice."

"Our country, which circumstantially has a chair at the UN Security Council, should actively support the continuity of the multinational peace force in Liberia..."

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